

REMARKS

At the outset, Applicant wishes to express appreciation to the Examiner for the indication that claims 5, 11, and 13-20 include allowable subject matter.

Summary of Office Action

In the Office Action dated September 21, 2005, claims 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,601,982 to Begemann et al. (Begemann'982). Claims 2-4, 8 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Begemann'982.

Summary of Response to Office Action

By this amendment, Applicant amends claims 1, 4, 5, and 7, cancels claim 11 without prejudice or disclaimer, and adds new claims 21-32. Accordingly, claims 1-10 and 12-32 are pending in this application.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

In the Office Action dated September 21, 2005, claims 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Begemann'982. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

With regard to independent claim 1, the features of claim 11 (which were indicated by the Examiner to include allowable subject matter in the September 21, 2005 Office Action) are now added to independent claim 1. However, it is respectfully submitted that this claim is allowable for other features, and for combinations of other features not pointed out by the Examiner.

Claims 6, 7, 9, and 10 depend from claim 1 and are therefore allowable at least for the reasons stated above with respect to claim 1 and for the separate features that they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Begemann'982 is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action dated September 21, 2005, claims 2-4, 8 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Begemann'982. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

As indicated above, independent claim 1 is amended to include the allowable features of claim 11. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2-4, 8 and 12, which all depend from claim 1, are also immediately allowable. Again, Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are allowable for the separate features that they recite, and for combinations of other features not pointed out by the Examiner.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2-4, 8 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Begemann'982 is respectfully requested.

Claim 5 is objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim. However, in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion, by this Amendment, claim 5 is rewritten in independent form to include features of base claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 5 is in immediate form for allowance. It is respectfully submitted that claim 5 as amended is allowable, as indicated by the Examiner, and for additional and other reasons than those stated by the Examiner. Withdrawal of the objection of claim 5 is respectfully requested.


With regard to claims 14-20, Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are allowable, as indicated by the Examiner, for other separate and combined features not pointed out by the Examiner.

Applicant respectfully submits that the present patent application is in condition for allowance. An early indication of the allowability of the present patent application is therefore respectfully solicited.

It is not believed that extensions of time are required, other than those petitioned for in the Amendment Transmittal. If, however, there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-2821. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,
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